

West Virginia State Profile

West Virginia Profile—Brief History

State History

People have lived in West Virginia for about 12,500 years, the earliest being the Paleo-Indians. Other native American cultures inhabited the area, but by the time the first European settlers arrived, all the Native American villages were gone, and the area was a hunting ground used by many tribes (including the Shawnee, Cherokee, Delaware, and Iroquois). The first white settlement of what is now West Virginia was probably at Mecklenburg (now Shepherdstown) in 1727. In 1731 Morgan Morgan established the first permanent white settlement on Mill Creek in present-day Berkeley County.

West Virginia shares its history with Virginia from 1607 until Virginia seceded from the Union in 1861. Delegates representing western counties formed their own government, which was granted statehood in 1863 by President Abraham Lincoln after conditions had been met requiring the gradual emancipation of slaves. West Virginia is the only state to be designated by presidential proclamation. In 1915, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that in forming a separate state, West Virginia owed more than \$12 million for “a just proportion of the public debt of the Commonwealth of Virginia.” A check was delivered in 1919, and bonds paid off the remainder in 1939.

West Virginia was a battleground during the Civil War. Although Confederates were unable to control significant regions of western Virginia for considerable periods of time during the war, they were successful in conducting destructive raids. The Eastern Panhandle saw continual fighting. Although it was not originally a part of West Virginia, it was annexed in 1863 because it contained the strategically important Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The divisions caused by the Civil War lasted long afterward. These were usually fought out in political arenas but occasionally developed into violence.

1882 saw the beginning of the now famous Hatfield-McCoy feud along the border region between West Virginia and Kentucky. The feud included many killings, involving the governors of both states in lengthy and heated controversy. The bloodshed of the West Virginia Hatfields and the Kentucky McCoyes ended in 1896.

Although coal was discovered on the Coal River in 1742, the growth of the railroads in the second half of the 1800s provided an economical method of transporting quantities of, not only coal, but other available natural resources in West Virginia.

Rapid industrial expansion began after the Civil War, attracting thousands of European immigrants and African Americans into the area. However, it was accompanied by serious labor problems, particularly in coal mines where wages were low and working conditions were dangerous. Mine owners bitterly resisted unionization. Strikes were often associated with serious and extended violence during the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century. Miners' strikes between 1912 and 1921 required the intervention of state and federal troops to quell the violence. Unionization grew after the Great Depression as a result of reforms. The state's chemical industry was founded during World War I when German chemicals were no longer available and was expanded during World War II. Both wars also brought unprecedented boom periods to the mining and steel industries in West Virginia.

Economic conditions improved during the 1960s as federal aid poured into the state and massive efforts were made to attract new industry. In the 1970s, West Virginia's coal-based economy flourished as energy prices rose dramatically; but West Virginia suffered through one of the worst economic periods in its history in the 1980s when energy prices fell.

Capital City

When West Virginia became a state in 1863, the capital was located in Wheeling.

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The State Legislature designated Charleston as the capital city in 1870. Kanawha County citizens provided a boat to move all state records to their new home in Charleston.

In 1875, the Legislature voted to return the capital to Wheeling. Although state officials boarded steamers on May 21 to journey to Wheeling, state archives and records did not arrive until late September, causing state government to be at a standstill for four months.

In 1877, the Legislature decided that the citizens would choose between Charleston, Martinsburg, and Clarksburg for a permanent capital location. As a result of the election, it was proclaimed that eight years hence, Charleston would be the government's permanent seat, and state officials again boarded a boat to move from Wheeling to Charleston, towing a barge containing the State records, papers, and library.

Capitol Building

The new capitol opened in May 1885 and served until its destruction by fire on January 3, 1921. For the next six years West Virginia state government was run from a "pasteboard capitol," a temporary structure built hastily in the wake of the fire. Although this structure was also destroyed by fire in 1927, the present capitol was already under construction on the north bank of the Kanawha River.

This new building, designed by Cass Gilbert, was completed in 1932 at a cost of \$10 million. In 1912, Gilbert had designed the world's first skyscraper, the Woolworth Building in New York City. His other works include the state capitols of Arkansas and Minnesota, and the U.S. Treasury Building and the U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C.

Two-thirds of the capitol interior is made of four different kinds of marble. The rotunda section and two wings provide 535,000 square feet of floor space and house 333 rooms. The exterior of the capitol, built in the classical style, is of buff Indiana limestone. The 293 foot gold dome atop the structure is five feet higher than the dome of the U.S. Capitol and in 1988 was totally gilded in 14 karat gold leaf applied to the copper and lead roof in tiny 3 3/8 inch squares. After undergoing structural repairs, the dome was restored in the fall of 2005 to Gilbert's original two-tone concept of lead gray paint and gold leaf details.

West Virginia Profile—Education and Libraries



Education

The West Virginia Board of Education and the Department of Education have embarked on a great 21st century adventure. Yesterday's three R's—reading, writing, and arithmetic—now must incorporate today's three R's—rigor, relevance, and relationships.

West Virginia is committed to closing the gap between the knowledge and skills students learn in school and the knowledge and skills they need for the 21st century work place. An emphasis must be placed on math, science, English, and languages. Equally so, an emphasis must be placed on global awareness, civics, business, finance, economics, and problem solving and analytical skills. As the world becomes more competitive and complex, the nation's future depends on the education of the young people.

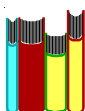
In 2006, West Virginia has 594 elementary schools and 166 secondary schools staffed by 24,535 professional personnel and 13,772 service personnel.

Public Higher Education Enrollment—Student Headcount

	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>
Colleges and Universities										
Enrollment	95,524	94,495	92,462	90,010	88,381	85,858	86,588	86,371	86,191	84,992
Certificates and degrees awarded	16,781	16,425	15,498	15,176	14,323	14,189	14,031	14,054	13,967	13,617

Public School Enrollment Grades K-12 Academic Years 1995-96 through 2005-06

	<u>2005-06</u>	<u>2004-05</u>	<u>2003-04</u>	<u>2002-03</u>	<u>2001-02</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>1999-00</u>	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	<u>1995-96</u>
Elementary	152,969	152,470	153,616	155,144	155,635	156,975	157,972	159,806	161,231	161,812	161,519
Secondary	126,819	126,987	126,945	126,447	126,597	128,810	132,972	136,753	140,083	142,612	145,989
Total All Grades	279,788	279,457	280,561	281,591	282,232	285,785	290,944	296,559	301,314	304,424	307,508



Library Information

West Virginia's 173 public libraries contain over five million items in print, audio, video, and electronic format and provide public Internet access and access to at least ten on-line databases. Annually, West Virginians visit their public libraries 6,089,422 times, borrow over seven million items, and use library electronic resources 1,305,726 times.

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West Virginia Profile—Healthcare



There are approximately 3,500 practicing physicians in West Virginia, as well as 22,000 active registered nurses, 73 hospitals and medical centers, 34 primary care centers with 63 satellites for a total of 97 clinical sites, 47 school-based health center sites, and 49 local boards of health with 54 health departments serving all the counties. There are ten free primary care clinics, and residents can access services in 54 county offices of the Department of Health and Human Resources.

Comparing West Virginia to Other States

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>WV</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Infant deaths (under one year old) per 1,000 live births:				
2001	Rate	7.2	23	6.8
2000	Rate	7.6	16	6.9
1998	Rate	8.0	16	7.2
1996	Rate	7.4	24	7.3
1990	Rate	9.9	14	9.2
Doctors per 100,000 resident population:				
2002	Rate	221	31	256
2001	Rate	219	30	253
2000	Rate	217	30	251
1998	Rate	215	30	251
1997	Rate	210	30	245
1990	Rate	172	36	216
Traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles:				
2002	Rate	2.2	4	1.5
2001	Rate	1.9	11	1.5
2000	Rate	2.1	7	1.5
1998	Rate	1.9	14	1.6
1997	Rate	2.1	9	1.7
1990	Rate	3.3	3	2.2

West Virginia State Profile

West Virginia Profile—Transportation



Aeronautics

There are 35 airports in the state; eight of them are commercial service airports.



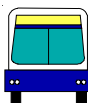
Highways

Of the 38,935 miles of public roads in West Virginia, 35,883 miles are on the state highway system, along with 6,636 bridges of which 4,511 are 100 feet or less in length. West Virginia has one All-American Road plus five nationally designated scenic byways; the Coal Heritage Trail, the Highland Scenic Highway, Washington Heritage Trail, the Midland Trail, and the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike.



Public Ports

West Virginia is home to over 400 miles of navigable waterways. The Port of Huntington Tri-State, 199 miles in length, is the largest statistic inland port in America as well as the seventh largest port for tonnage. There are over 300 private industrial facilities located along West Virginia waterways that depend on the low cost advantages of river borne commerce. An inland container port being developed in Prichard (Wayne County) will be one of the first of its kind located in the heart of Appalachia.



Public Transportation

The Division of Public Transit oversees 17 transit systems that employ 485 full-time and 106 part-time workers. The buses traveled 9,984,749 miles and carried 5,158,512 passengers of which 1,053,199 were elderly or disabled.



Railroads

Route miles of railroad operated within West Virginia totaled 2,264 miles at the end of 2005 – 80 miles of freight lines were owned by the State. Trains hauled 2,868,972 carloads of freight, a total of 216,746,066 tons. Of all freight originated in the state and hauled by rail, 95% was coal.

West Virginia State Profile

West Virginia Profile—Public Safety



Law Enforcement

In 2006, there were 183 municipal law enforcement agencies in West Virginia plus the State Police with 62 detachments, DNR with 55 detachments, 55 sheriff's departments, and the State Fire Marshal's Office. There were 3,058 full-time sworn law enforcement officers—2,967 men and 91 women (including 30 officers with the Fire Marshal's Office); since at least 2000, there has been an average of 1.7 for each 1,000 inhabitants.

Comparing West Virginia to Other States

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>WV</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Violent crimes per 100,000 population:				
2003	Rate	258	42	475
2002	Rate	234	44	495
2001	Rate	279	37	504
1999	Rate	351	30	525
1997	Rate	219	44	611
1990	Rate	169	44	732



Fire Services

West Virginia has 449 fire departments—419 of these are volunteer fire departments, 12 career departments (fully paid), and 18 are a combination of paid and volunteer. There are approximately 11,147 firefighters—870 paid and 10,277 volunteers.

Many of these fire service personnel make up six distinct regional response teams which are situated throughout the state, under the leadership of the state fire marshal. The regional response teams are comprised of trained members of public safety groups (fire, EMS, law enforcement, etc.) and the private sector for the purpose of mitigating actual or suspected hazardous materials incidents and emergencies across West Virginia.

Fire service members and other emergency services groups are also grouped into eight swift-water rescue teams deployed by the State Fire Marshal (under the authority of the Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety) during disasters involving flooding, water rescue, and water-related fatalities, etc.

Fire is the biggest threat to West Virginia's forests. In a ten-year period from 1986 to 1995, forest fires burned a yearly average of 97,470 acres. The damage during that ten-year period, including damage to homes, structures, and other land, has been computed to be \$21,630,577.

West Virginia Profile—Recreation and Culture

Tourism remains a growing sector of the state's economy, and a wealth of recreational and cultural opportunities is available. The state is home to more than 200 historic sites and museums. West Virginia, the third most heavily forested state in the nation, abounds with scenic natural beauty and outdoor sports and activities. People locally and from around the world come to enjoy snow skiing, white water rafting, camping, RVing, hiking, hunting, fishing, wildlife, photography, birding, all-terrain vehicle riding, and biking. Visitors can also tour numerous historic sites, journey into an underground coal mine, visit the world's largest moveable radio telescope, spy bald eagles in their natural habitats, and purchase and enjoy West Virginian crafts, art, and cuisine.

From rustic Civilian Conservation Corps era areas with little development to massive modern resorts; from restored logging railroads and company towns to Civil War battlefields; from natural areas with national significance to areas that are primarily day-use local recreational facilities; West Virginia state parks, forests, and wildlife management areas offer tremendous variety. West Virginia has 34 state parks, recreational facilities on nine state forests, and four wildlife management areas. Although there are hundreds of miles of walking and biking trails throughout the state parks system, only two rail trails are under their jurisdiction—the Greenbrier River Trail and the North Bend Rail Trail.

West Virginia has a rich heritage in music and arts, from traditional Appalachian dance and bluegrass music, to some of the country's top performers and most fantastic performance halls. The 240,000 square-foot Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences of West Virginia in downtown Charleston houses the performing arts, visual arts, and the sciences under one roof—one of the few centers of its kind in the country. The facility is home to the Avampato Discovery Museum and the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. The West Virginia Symphony is the state's premiere orchestra, offering a symphonic series, a pop series, special events series, opera and ballet and touring concerts and the Montclair String Quartet. The other two symphony orchestras in the state are located in Huntington and Wheeling.

A production of West Virginia Public Broadcasting, *Mountain Stage* is a series of two-hour specials that presents acts ranging from traditional roots and country music to avant garde rock and jazz. In addition to showcasing both established and emerging artists from the United States, *Mountain Stage* has featured artists from all over the world. The radio show is recorded before a live audience at the state Cultural Center on Charleston's capitol complex. Now in its 20th year, the show has a long tradition of featuring national and international acts in almost every style of music.

For 70 years, the Marshall Artists Series has brought some of the nation's finest performers to Huntington and the luxurious vaudeville-era Keith-Albee Theatre. It is the oldest continuous live arts presentation program in the country. The theater itself is a showpiece that was second only in size to New York's Roxy theater when it was built in 1928. Today it is restored to its original glory and operated as a performing arts center.

One of many festivals and fairs held throughout West Virginia, the Augusta Heritage Festival (held annually the second weekend in August) culminates the Augusta Heritage workshops, bringing together cajun, creole, guitar, blues, swing, Irish, bluegrass, folk arts, old-time, vocal and traditional music and dance, artists and crafts exhibitors, storytellers, singers, dancers, and more.

Major Points of Interest

✓ **Appalachian Power Park**—Home to the West Virginia Power, Charleston's minor league baseball team, Appalachian Power Park debuted for the 2005 inaugural season of the Power. Located in the historic East End, it is popular among capital city visitors and baseball fans for its downtown location and open-air feel.

West Virginia Profile—Recreation and Culture

- ✓ **Berkeley Springs**—Long before the first Europeans discovered its warm waters, this region was already a famous health spa attracting Native Americans from Canada to the Carolinas. George Washington even slept here. Today, Berkeley Springs offers state-of-the-art spas, unique shops, and local arts.
- ✓ **Cabela's**—As an outfitter for hunting, fishing, and outdoor activities, Cabela's opened a 175,000 square-foot store in Wheeling. It includes a wildlife museum, a television broadcast studio, three freshwater aquariums totaling 55,000 gallons (stocked with fish native to West Virginia), and a 250-seat restaurant with park-like seating that overlooks the entire store.
- ✓ **Civil War Heritage Trail**—West Virginia had the misfortune of being in the middle of the Civil War, literally torn between North and South, and the territory that now is the state changed hands almost daily during the battle. New tourist signage marks the location of key Civil War sites and helps interpret West Virginia's unique history, including Droop Mountain Battlefield and the boyhood home of Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.
- ✓ **Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences**—Located in the historic East End of Charleston the new Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences includes a performance hall, art, a science and children's interactive museum, and a large-format film theater and planetarium.
- ✓ **Coal Heritage Trail**—Visitors and historians can experience life as it was in the coal camps of Appalachia on the Coal Heritage Trail in West Virginia. The scenic byway winds through southern West Virginia's rugged mountains and valleys, which contain remnants of the early 20th century coal boom, including the millionaire mansions in Bramwell and the Beckley Exhibition Coal Mine. Guests at the mine can venture 500 feet underground in vintage "man cars" guided by former coal miners.
- ✓ **The Greenbrier Resort**—The Greenbrier is a AAA Five-Diamond, award-winning resort nestled on 6,500 acres in the scenic Allegheny Mountains in White Sulphur Springs. This world-renowned getaway offers more than 50 activities, including three 18-hole championship golf courses, a golf academy, a gallery of fine shops, and a host of traditional amenities that have distinguished the resort for over 200 years.



The Greenbrier Resort



National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank

- ✓ **Harpers Ferry**—In addition to its fabulous scenery, Harpers Ferry was the site of the first successful application of interchangeable manufacture, the arrival of the first successful American railroad, John Brown's attack on slavery, the largest surrender of Federal troops during the Civil War, and the education of former slaves in one of the earliest integrated schools in the United States. In 2006, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park commemorates the 100th anniversary of the gathering of the Niagara Movement, the first major civil rights organization of the 20th century.

West Virginia Profile—Recreation and Culture

- ✓ **Hatfield-McCoy Trails**—The Hatfield-McCoy Trail system draws beginner to expert all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts and thrill-seekers for over 500 miles of the East Coast’s biggest and best ATV trails coursing through the mountains of southern West Virginia. The popularity of the new system has resulted in new tourism-related developments near the trailheads, easily accessible after a short drive from Charleston.
- ✓ **National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank**—Home of the Green Bank Telescope, the world’s largest moveable radio telescope, researchers study the universe through natural radio emissions. A new \$7.2 million education center opened in 2003.
- ✓ **New River Gorge National River**—Encompassing over 70,000 acres of land along the New River, this national park protects 53 miles of free-flowing water. The gorge, carved by the world’s second-oldest river, has been dubbed the “Grand Canyon of the East.” A new eco-friendly visitor center opened near Sandstone in 2003.
- ✓ **Oglebay Resort and the Winter Festival of Lights**—Oglebay is a 1,650-acre resort with abundant recreational activities, deluxe accommodations, a zoo, gardens, three golf courses, and shops nestled in the hills surrounding Wheeling. Home to America’s largest light show, the Winter Festival of Lights, over one million visitors and 3,000 tour buses come each year to experience the show. Oglebay recently reopened its downhill skiing area after a seven-year absence, adding a new triple-chair lift and snowmaking equipment.
- ✓ **Pullman Square**—In November 2004, officials opened Pullman Square, a new \$60 million retail, dining, and entertainment complex in downtown Huntington. The facility features a state-of-the-art stadium seating cinema complex, bookstore, themed restaurants, comedy club, and retail shops.
- ✓ **Stonewall Resort**—The latest development in state park facilities sits along the shore of the state’s second-largest impoundment, Stonewall Jackson Lake, and features an Arnold Palmer-designed championship golf course, lodge, deluxe cottages, houseboat rentals, and spa. In 2004, the resort opened a golf clubhouse and restaurant and added a 125-passenger excursion boat for dinner and sightseeing cruises.
- ✓ **Tamarack**—Tamarack is the nation’s first and only statewide collection of handmade craft, art, and cuisine showcasing “The Best of West Virginia” from hand-carved furniture to glass, from pottery to Appalachian quilts, and more. Tamarack offers regional specialty foods and products, as well as performances, craft demonstrations, shopping, theater, art gallery, and a food court managed by The Greenbrier.
- ✓ **West Virginia Scenic Railroads**—West Virginia features more than 80 railroad attractions, including the world-famous Cass Scenic Railroad State Park and the Mountain State Mystery Train and New River Gorge excursions. There are also diesel favorites like the Potomac Eagle excursions, on which passengers enjoy a 90% chance of seeing a bald eagle, in addition to the recently expanded Durbin and Greenbrier Valley Railroad. West Virginia is steeped in railroad traditions, and a number of historic facilities mark this heritage.
- ✓ **Flatwoods RV Park and Ampitheatre**—Located just off I-79 in Flatwoods, the geographic center of West Virginia, is a new, recreational vehicle resort. The Flatwoods RV Park sits just behind the impressive two-tower Flatwoods Days Inn and has 50 lots and wide, paved roads ready to accommodate large RVs. It sits directly next to the brand-new, 2,000-seat Mountain Lakes Amphitheater, and across I-79 from the shopper’s favorite Flatwoods Factory Stores farmers’ market and outlet mall.

(This is by no means a complete list. There are numerous local, state, and national parks, as well as a plethora of fairs and festivals held every year across the state. Information on any of these activities is available by calling the West Virginia Division of Tourism toll-free at 1-800-CALL WVA or connecting to their Web site at <www.callwva.com>. The Web site for West Virginia state parks is <www.wvstateparks.com>.)

West Virginia State Profile

Form of Government

West Virginia has a constitutional representative government with three distinct branches.

Legislative Branch

Senators are elected to four-year terms with half of the seats up for election every two years. All members of the House of Delegates are up for election every two years. State lawmakers must be United States citizens and eligible to vote. A delegate must be at least 18 years old and a resident of his/her district for one year, while a senator must be at least 25 years old and a resident of the state for five years. If a legislator moves out of his/her district, the seat becomes vacant.

If a vacancy occurs in either house of the Legislature, the governor appoints an individual of the same political party as the departing member to fill the seat until the next general election.

Senatorial districts	17
Delegate districts	58
Congressional districts	3
Members of House of Delegates	100
Members of the Senate	34

Executive Branch

West Virginia's Constitution provides for six elected officials in the executive branch of government:

Governor	Attorney General
Auditor	Commissioner of Agriculture
Secretary of State	Treasurer

A governor is elected for a term of four years. Having served during all or any part of two consecutive terms, he or she is then ineligible for the office of governor during any part of the term immediately following the second of the two consecutive terms. The terms of the other five elected officials are four years without term limitations.

Because West Virginia does not have a lieutenant governor, the next two officials in the line of succession are the senate president and the speaker of the house of delegates.

Judicial Branch

As of January 1, 1976, West Virginia created a unified court system, uniting all state courts (except municipal courts) into a single system supervised and administered by the West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals. This system was comprised of only the Supreme Court of Appeals, circuit courts, and magistrate courts. However, at the beginning of 2002, Family Courts were added to the judicial system.

The Supreme Court of Appeals is West Virginia's highest court and the court of last resort. West Virginia is one of only eleven states with a single appellate court. The Supreme Court of Appeals of West Virginia is the busiest appellate court of its type in the United States. There are two terms of the Court each year. The five justices are elected in partisan elections to 12-year terms. Justices must have practiced law for at least ten years. The position of chief justice is determined annually by vote of the Court. The governor appoints justices to fill vacancies.

West Virginia is divided into 31 circuits with 66 circuit judges. A circuit may range in size from one county with seven judges to eleven counties with one judge. Although a circuit is made up of from one to four counties, each county has a courthouse where the circuit judge presides. Circuit judges are elected in partisan elections to eight-year terms and must have practiced law for at least five years. The governor appoints judges to fill vacancies.

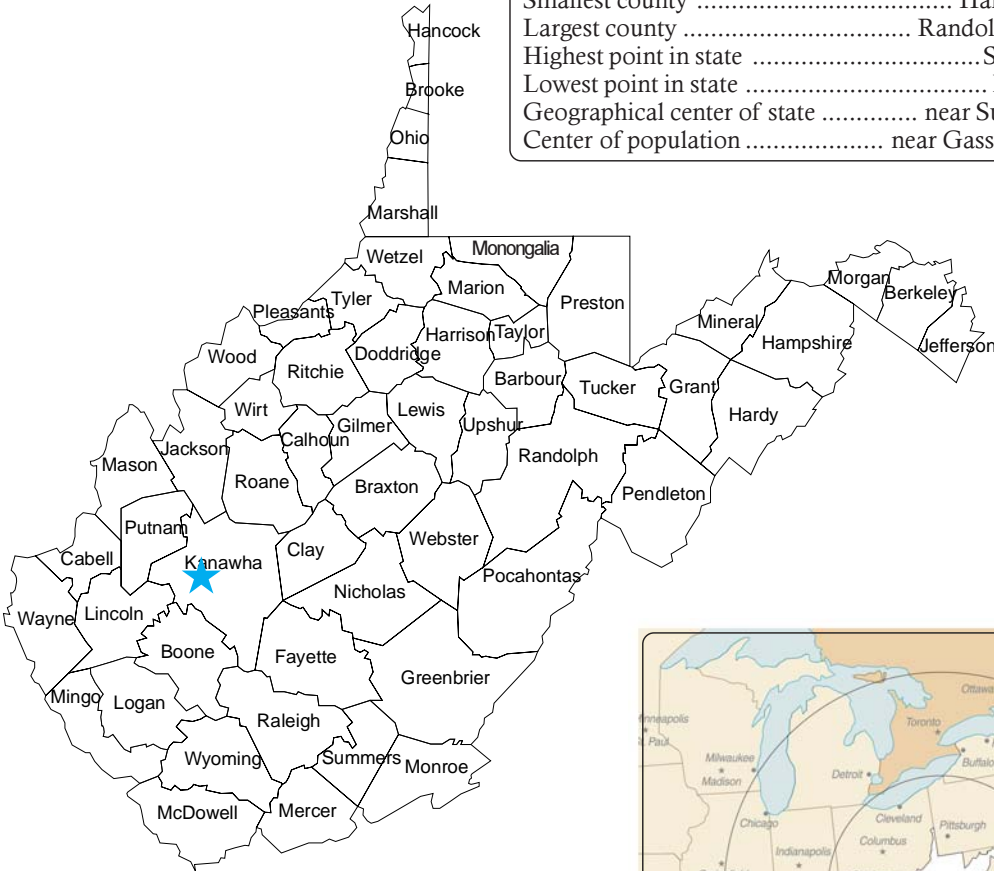
There are 158 magistrates statewide, with at least two in every county and ten in the largest county. The circuit courts hear appeals of magistrate court cases. Magistrates run for four-year terms in partisan elections and are not required to be lawyers. Circuit judges appoint magistrates to fill vacancies.

There are 35 family court judges serving 26 family court circuits. Family court judges were elected in partisan elections for the first time in 2002. Their initial terms are for six years; subsequent terms will be for eight years.

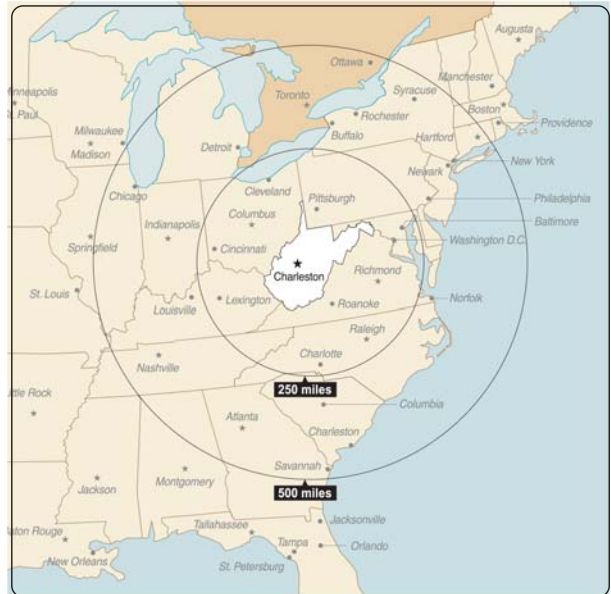
Geography

West Virginia has an mean altitude of 1,500 feet, giving it the highest average altitude east of the Mississippi.

Area (square miles) land and water	24,231
Counties	55
Municipalities	234
State capital	Charleston, Kanawha County
Youngest county in state	Mingo (1895)
Oldest county	Hampshire (1754)
Smallest county	Hancock (area 88 sq. mi.)
Largest county	Randolph (area 1,040 sq. mi.)
Highest point in state	Spruce Knob (4,861 ft.)
Lowest point in state	Harpers Ferry (247 ft.)
Geographical center of state	near Sutton, Braxton County
Center of population	near Gassaway, Braxton County



West Virginia experiences four distinct seasons. In the low-lying areas and valleys, including the western regions of the state and the Eastern Panhandle, winters are mild and summers are warm. In the central, more mountainous areas of the state, particularly the Potomac Highlands, winters are colder, with a greater probability of snow, and summers are mild. (The Potomac Highlands is an area comprised of Mineral, Hampshire, Tucker, Grant, Hardy, Randolph, Pendleton, and Pocahontas counties.)



Precipitation across the state averages 40 to 60 inches per year; roughly 25 of the days in an average year show noticeable precipitation. Snowfall averages 20 to 25 inches per year in most of the state, except for the Potomac Highlands region, which receives significantly more.

West Virginia State Profile

Demographics and Economics

Population, Income, and Age

Calendar Years 1996-2005

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>
<u>Population (in thousands)</u>										
West Virginia	1,816	1,812	1,810	1,804	1,801	1,807	1,811	1,815	1,819	1,822
Change	0.24%	0.12%	0.32%	0.17%	(0.33%)	(0.24%)	(0.21%)	(0.19%)	(0.20%)	(0.05%)
National	296,410	293,656	290,850	287,984	285,107	282,193	279,731	276,553	273,368	270,115
Change	0.94%	0.97%	0.99%	1.01%	1.03%	0.88%	1.15%	1.17%	1.20%	2.78%
<u>Total Personal Income</u>										
West Virginia (in thousands)	\$47,290	\$45,245	\$43,342	\$43,311	\$41,902	\$39,582	\$37,557	\$36,721	\$35,004	\$33,622
Change	4.52%	4.39%	0.07%	3.36%	5.86%	5.39%	2.28%	4.90%	4.11%	4.00%
National (in billions)	\$10,295	\$9,713	\$9,169	\$8,882	\$8,724	\$8,430	\$7,802	\$7,423	\$6,915	\$6,512
Change	5.99%	5.93%	3.23%	1.81%	3.49%	8.05%	5.11%	7.35%	6.19%	6.79%
<u>Per Capita Personal Income*</u>										
West Virginia	\$26,029	\$24,962	\$23,941	\$24,002	\$23,261	\$21,899	\$20,729	\$20,226	\$19,243	\$18,445
Change	4.27%	4.26%	(0.25%)	3.19%	6.22%	5.64%	2.49%	5.11%	4.33%	4.05%
National	\$34,495	\$33,090	\$31,463	\$30,810	\$30,574	\$29,845	\$27,939	\$26,883	\$25,334	\$24,175
Change	4.25%	5.17%	2.12%	0.77%	2.44%	6.82%	3.93%	6.11%	4.79%	4.17%

* Per capita personal income is calculated by dividing total personal income by population.

Median Age—West Virginians	40.7	40.2	39.9	39.5	39.3	39.0	38.9	38.5	38.1	37.7
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Education

Educational Attainment

	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>
9th Grade or Less	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	16.8%	16.8%	16.8%	16.8%
Some High School, No Diploma	14.8%	14.8%	14.8%	14.8%	14.8%	14.8%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%	17.3%
High School Diploma	39.4%	39.4%	39.4%	39.4%	39.4%	39.4%	36.6%	36.6%	36.6%	36.6%
Some College, No Degree	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	16.6%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%	13.2%
Associate, Bachelor's or Graduate Degree	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%	19.2%	16.1%	16.1%	16.1%	16.1%

Comparing West Virginia to Other States

	<u>Unit</u>	<u>WV</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>U.S.</u>
Persons at least 25 years old with Bachelors degree or more:				
2003	Percent	15.3	50	27.2
2002	Percent	15.9	50	26.7
2000	Percent	14.8	50	24.4
1999	Percent	17.9	48	25.2
1990	Percent	12.3	50	20.3

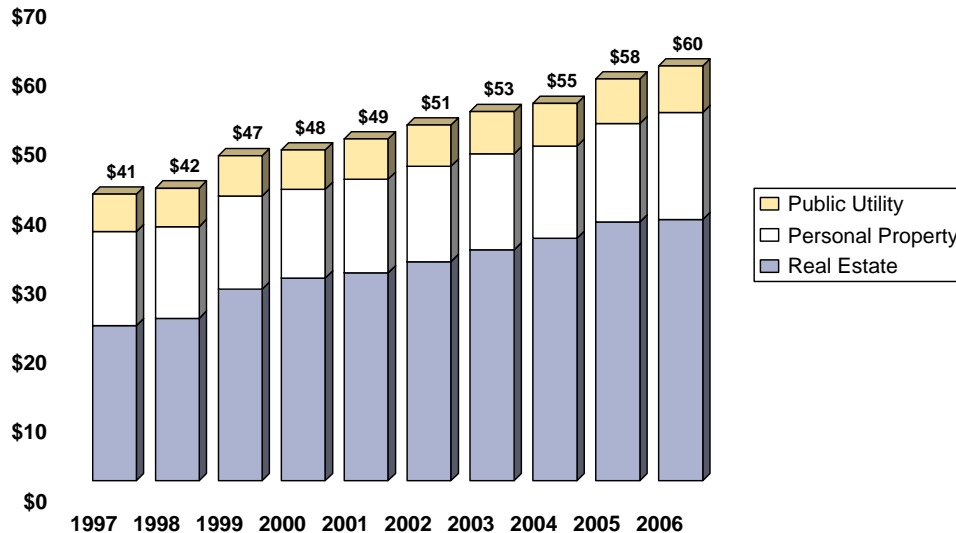
Property Values

Property subject to property tax in West Virginia is to be revalued annually. All properties, with the exception of farms and managed timberland, are to be assessed at 60% of their actual market value. Total assessed valuations for Tax Year 2006 came to \$59.89 billion. The statewide average levy rate for all property was 1.91%.

Demographics and Economics

A major portion of the expense of local government units is met from the proceeds of taxes levied upon real and personal property. The property tax is administered by officials of local taxing authorities (municipalities, county school boards, and county governments), as well as by officials of a number of state agencies. Less than one-half of one percent of the property tax collected goes to state government. For example, of property taxes levied for FY 2006, the State received 0.42%, the counties 26.04%, the school boards 65.16%, and the municipalities 8.38%.

West Virginia Taxable Assessed Property Values (In Billions)



Source: Department of Revenue, Property Tax Division
 1. The tax on Class I intangibles is being phased out over a six-year period beginning in 1998, when over a 50% reduction in Class I intangible assessments reduced personal property valuations by \$1.0 billion.

Principal Employers

Current Year and Nine Years Ago

As of June 30, 2006		As of June 30, 1997	
<u>Major West Virginia Employers</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>	<u>Major West Virginia Employers</u>	<u>Number of Employees</u>
State of West Virginia	40,000-49,999	State of West Virginia	35,000-39,999
Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.	10,000-19,999	Federal Government	20,000-24,999
West Virginia University Hospitals/ United Hospitals	5,000-9,999	Weirton Steel Corporation	5,000-5,999
Charleston Area Medical Center	5,000-9,999	Charleston Area Medical Center	5,000-5,999
Kroger	2,500-4,999	Kroger	4,000-4,999
CSX/CSX Hotels Inc.		Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	4,000-4,999
(The Greenbrier and railroad)	2,500-4,999	E I DuPont De Nemours	3,000-3,999
American Electric Power	2,500-4,999	Union Carbide Corporation	2,000-2,999
Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	1,000-2,499	Ravenswood Aluminum	2,000-2,999
Consolidation Coal Company	1,000-2,499	West Virginia University Hospitals	2,000-2,999
Verizon	1,000-2,499	Kmart Corporation	2,000-2,999
St. Mary's Hospital	1,000-2,499	Appalachian Power Company	2,000-2,999

Economic Base

The state ranks second in the nation in coal production, and coal is mined in 28 of West Virginia's 55 counties. Annual coal production was 153 million tons in 2005, about 60% of which comes from underground mines. West Virginia also is a leader in the chemical, steel, aluminum, natural gas, oil and hardwood lumber industries. The state's diverse economic base also includes the energy, plastics, transportation equipment, biomedical technology, and distribution industries.

West Virginia is one of the largest producers of oil and natural gas east of the Mississippi River. It has produced significant amounts of natural gas in the Appalachian Basin. Natural gas production in 2005 was 230 billion cubic feet, and oil production in 2004 was 1.5 million barrels.

West Virginia's forest products industry employs over 30,000 residents and contributes four billion dollars, directly and indirectly, to the state's economy. Forests contribute an additional three billion dollars to the state's economy by other uses such as forest based recreation and tourism, fruits, nuts, medical plants such as ginseng, and Christmas trees. The jobs created by the forest products industry are dependent on the 12 million acres of forests, which are 90% privately owned by 260,000 landowners. According to the 2000 inventory conducted by the U.S. Forest Service, the state remains 78% forested, even though the timber harvest has doubled since the last inventory. Annual growth exceeds harvest by 30%, and species of oak comprise 48% of harvested wood. West Virginia is the third most heavily forested state in the nation and has more total hardwood volume than any other state except Pennsylvania.

West Virginia has 20,800 primarily family-owned and operated farms, generating nearly a half-billion dollars worth of products annually. Although the state is ranked 37th in population and 41st in geographical size, it ranks 11th in apple production, 13th in peach production, 15th in turkey production and 16th in broiler chicken production. State agribusinesses are an expanding element of the state's economy, annually producing at least \$100 million worth of value-added, West Virginia Grown products. Nearly all of these companies are locally owned and operated and inject a large portion of their net revenue back into the local economy in the form of wages and business expenses. West Virginia products are recognized for their high quality and improve the image of the Mountain State across the country and throughout the world. They also dovetail nicely with the state's tourism industry, as studies indicate that vacationers seek unique culinary experiences when they travel.

A West Virginia Division of Tourism study released in 2005 shows that travel spending by visitors in the state was over \$3.4 billion in 2004, and has increased by 11.4% per year since 2000. Visitors who stayed overnight in commercial lodging facilities spent \$1.2 billion on their trips, while day travelers spent \$1.7 billion. Visitor spending in West Virginia directly supports more than 40,000 jobs with earnings of \$766 million.

Outdoor-related recreational opportunities provided or regulated by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources have an estimated economic impact of more than one billion dollars each year. Those activities include hunting, fishing, state parks and forests, wildlife viewing, whitewater rafting, and recreational boating. These activities make up a major portion of the state's growing tourism industry.

A total of 940,213 various license privileges (fishing, hunting, and trapping) were sold totaling \$12,432,003.00 in 2005. To date, West Virginia has 40,162 adult lifetime holders and 10,035 infant lifetime holders. A recent study shows they produce a more than \$105-million economic impact each year.

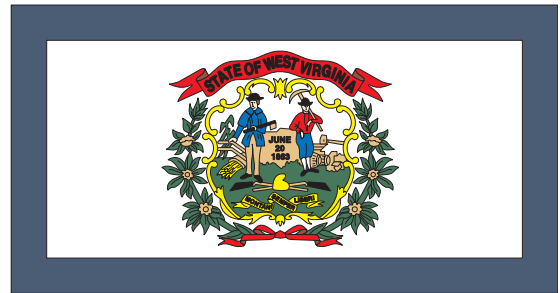
West Virginia State Profile

Miscellaneous—State Symbols

State Flag

The state flag was officially adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1929, by Senate Joint Resolution 18.

Prominently displayed on the pure white field of today's flag and emblazoned in proper colors is a coat of arms, the lower half of which is wreathed by rhododendron, the State Flower. Across the top, lettered on a ribbon, is the constitutional designation "State of West Virginia." The white field is bordered on four sides by a strip of blue, and, for parade purposes, all but the staff side are to be trimmed with gold fringe.



Great Seal of West Virginia



The great seal of West Virginia, which also is the coat of arms, was adopted by the Legislature on September 26, 1863, and symbolizes the principal pursuits and resources of West Virginia. Described briefly, the obverse side of the seal bears the legend "State of West Virginia," together with the motto, "Montani Semper Liberi" (Mountaineers Are Always Free); a farmer stands to the left and a miner to the right of a large ivy-draped rock bearing the date of the state's admission to the Union. In front of the rock are two hunters' rifles upon which rests a Phrygian cap or "cap of liberty."

Joseph H. Diss Debar, of Doddridge county, designed the state seal in 1863 at the request of the first West Virginia Legislature.

Official Colors

Old gold and blue were designated as official state colors by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 20, adopted by the Legislature on March 8, 1963.

Official Day

On January 1, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln approved the Statehood Bill for West Virginia on the condition that it would gradually abolish slavery. West Virginia was proclaimed a state on April 20, 1863, with the bill becoming effective sixty days later on June 20, 1863. "West Virginia Day" became a legal holiday by Chapter 59, Acts of the Legislature, Regular Session, 1927.

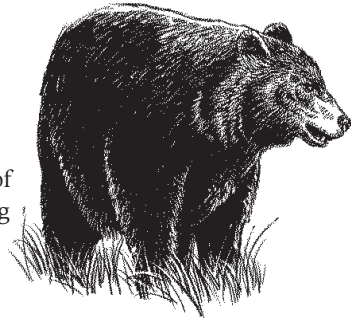
State Songs

"The West Virginia Hills," "This Is My West Virginia," and "West Virginia, My Home Sweet Home" were designated as the official state songs of West Virginia, each ranking equally with the others in official status, by House Concurrent Resolution No. 19, adopted by the Legislature on February 28, 1963.

Miscellaneous—State Symbols

State Animal

The black bear (*Euractos Americanus*) was selected as the official state animal of West Virginia by a poll of students, teachers, and sportsmen conducted by the Department of Natural Resources in 1954-55 and officially adopted by the Legislature in 1973 by House Concurrent Resolution No. 6. It is the only species of bear found in the state. While commonly referred to as the “black bear,” its coloring is actually deeply tinted with brown. Its habitat in West Virginia is primarily in the eastern mountain region. A litter ususally consists of one or two cubs, rarely three, each weighing about eight ounces at birth. The adult reaches an average maximum weight of 250 pounds.



State Bird

The cardinal (*Richmondena Cardinalis*) was made West Virginia’s official bird by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12, adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1949, authorizing a vote by pupils of public schools and civic organizations. The male of the species is a rich scarlet with a mask and shading of black, while the young birds and females are a less brilliant color. The adult bird measures approximately eight inches long. It ranges from New York State to the Gulf of Mexico and as far west as Oklahoma.



State Butterfly

The monarch butterfly was declared the official butterfly of West Virginia by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 11, adopted by the Legislature on March 1, 1995.



State Fish

The brook trout was designated the state fish by House Concurrent Resolution No. 6, adopted in 1973 following a poll of sportsmen who favored the brook trout. The brook trout is a native West Virginia species.



State Flower

The *Rhododendron Maximum*, or “Big Laurel,” was made the official state flower of West Virginia by House Joint Resolution No. 19, adopted by the Legislature on January 29, 1903, following a recommendation by the governor and a vote by the pupils of public schools. The rhododendron is a shrub of the heath family and may be recognized by its large evergreen leaves and delicate pale pink or white bloom, mottled with either red or yellow flecks.



Miscellaneous—State Symbols



State Fruit

The Golden Delicious apple was designated as the official state fruit by Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7, adopted by the Legislature on February 20, 1995. This apple variety was discovered by Anderson Mullins in Clay County, West Virginia, in 1905. The plain apple had been previously designated as the official state fruit by House Concurrent Resolution No. 56, adopted March 7, 1972.

State Gem

The state gem, so designated by House Concurrent Resolution No. 39, March 10, 1990, is technically not a gemstone, but rather the silicified Mississippian fossil coral *Lithostrotionella*, preserved as the siliceous mineral chalcedony. It is found in the Hillsdale Limestone in portions of Greenbrier and Pocahontas counties and is often cut and polished for jewelry and for display.

State Insect

The honeybee became West Virginia's official state insect in 2002 by the Legislature's Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 9. In addition to its flavorful honey, the honeybee pollinates many of the state's most important crops including fruits, vegetables, and grasses. Its activity produces more benefit to the state's economy than any other insect. The honeybee has six legs, four wings, and its coloring ranges from dark yellow to gold with three dark bands on its abdomen.



State Soil

The state soil is Monongahela silt loam, adopted by concurrent resolution in 1997, making West Virginia the twelfth state to have an official state soil.



State Tree

The sugar maple, *Acer Saccharum*, was made West Virginia's official tree by House Concurrent Resolution No. 12, adopted by the Legislature on March 7, 1949, authorizing a vote by pupils of public schools and civic organizations. It produces an excellent wood for future use as well as maple syrup. A single tree can be 70 to 120 feet high and produce two to three pounds of sugar when "sugared off," has a five-lobed leaf, and produces a small wing-shaped pod.

West Virginia State Profile

Miscellaneous—Famous West Virginians

Randy Barnes (1966-) perhaps the world's greatest shot-putter. He holds both the outdoor and indoor world records and was a gold medalist in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. He grew up in St. Albans, Kanawha County.

Pearl Buck (1892-1973), American novelist, born in Hillsboro, Pocahontas County. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature and the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Many of her more than 85 books sympathetically portray China and its people.

Robert Carlyle Byrd (1917-) was elected in 2006 to a ninth consecutive term in the U.S. Senate. He was the majority leader of the Senate from 1977 to 1981 and from 1987 to 1989. Byrd is from Sophia, Raleigh County.

Bob Denver (1935-2005), who played "Gilligan" on the TV series *Gilligan's Island* and "Maynard G. Krebs" on the TV series *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*, lived near Princeton, Mercer County. His wife Dreama is from West Virginia.

Jennifer Garner (1972-) starred in the ABC series *Alias*. She has appeared in films such as *Pearl Harbor* and *Mr. Magoo* and has had a series regular roles on television. She was born in Houston, but grew up in the Charleston area and graduated from George Washington High School.

Homer H. Hickam, Jr. (1943-) is the author of *Rocket Boys: A Memoir*, the story of his life in the little town of Coalwood, McDowell County, that inspired the number one bestseller and award-winning movie *October Sky*.

Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson (1824-1863) was a general in the Confederacy during the Civil War and is considered among the most skillful tacticians in military history. He was born in Clarksburg (then Virginia).

Anna Jarvis (1864-1948) considered the founder of Mother's Day. Following the death of her own mother in 1905, she began campaigning to have one day a year set aside to honor mothers. In 1914 President Wilson signed a proclamation declaring Mother's Day a holiday. She was born near Grafton, Taylor County.

Don Jesse Knotts (1924-2006), television and movie actor, born in Morgantown (Monongalia County) to a farm family he described as "dirt poor." He attended West Virginia University where he majored in speech, hoping to become a teacher. Knotts played the role of "Barney Fife" on the *Andy Griffith Show*.

Captain Jon A. McBride (1943-) became an astronaut in August 1979 and piloted the Challenger when it was launched on October 5, 1984. He was a Republican candidate for Governor of West Virginia in 1996. McBride was born in Charleston, Kanawha County.

Kathy Mattea (1959-), country music star, born in South Charleston and grew up in Cross Lanes, Kanawha County.

John Forbes Nash Jr. (1928-), described as a mathematical genius who essentially lost 30 years of his life to paranoid schizophrenia and who re-emerged into public glory (once the disease was in remission) to receive the 1994 Nobel Prize in Economics for a brilliant doctoral dissertation begun in 1950 (from *A Beautiful Mind*, a biography of Nash by Sylvia Nasar that inspired a movie of the same name). Nash was born and reared in Bluefield, Mercer County.

Mary Lou Retton (1968-), gymnast who won four medals in the 1984 Summer Olympics, including the gold in the all-around gymnastics competition. She is from Fairmont, Marion County.

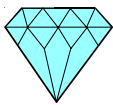
Jerome Alan "Jerry" West (1938-), a professional basketball star for the Los Angeles Lakers, was chosen one of the 50 greatest National Basketball Association basketball players in 1996. He was born in Cabin Creek, Kanawha County.

Charles Elwood "Chuck" Yeager (1923-) became the first person to fly faster than the speed of sound in October 1947 and the first person to fly more than twice the speed of sound in December 1953. He was born at Myra in Lincoln County.

This is just a sampling of the many famous West Virginians. For a more extensive list, visit Jeff Miller's Famous West Virginians page at <<http://members.aol.com/jeff560/westvirginia.html> >.

West Virginia State Profile

Miscellaneous—Interesting Facts



The third-largest diamond ever found in the United States, the “Punch” Jones Diamond, was found near Peterstown, in Monroe County within one-half mile of the Virginia state line. It has been suggested that the diamond actually occurred in rocks in Virginia and that erosion carried it to the West Virginia side of the state line. There are no other likely sites for diamonds in this state.

No other precious gems are known to have been found in West Virginia. Among the few gemstones found in West Virginia are some opal, some types of quartz, and two coal or coal-like minerals which, though softer than most gemstones, are cut, polished, and carved into jewelry.

A variety of the yellow apple, the Golden Delicious, originated in Clay County. The original Grimes Golden Apple Tree was discovered in 1775 near Wellsburg.

The first steamboat was launched by James Rumsey in the Potomac River at New Mecklenburg (Shepherdstown) on December 3, 1787.

On February 14, 1824, at Harpers Ferry, John S. Gallaher published the “Ladies Garland,” one of the first papers in the nation devoted mainly to the interests of women.

One of the first suspension bridges in the world was completed in Wheeling in November 1849.

Bailey Brown, the first Union soldier killed in the Civil War, died on May 22, 1861, at Fetterman, Taylor County.



The first rural free mail delivery began in Charles Town, October 6, 1896, then spread across the United States.

A naval battle was fought in West Virginia waters during the Civil War. United States Navy armored steamers were actively engaged in the Battle of Buffington Island near Ravenswood on July 19, 1863.

Mother’s Day was first observed at Andrews Church in Grafton on May 10, 1908.

Outdoor advertising had its origin in Wheeling about 1908 when the Block Brothers Tobacco Company painted bridges and barns with the wording: “Treat Yourself to the Best, Chew Mail Pouch.”

West Virginia was the first state to have a sales tax. It became effective July 1, 1921.

Mrs. Minnie Buckingham Harper, a member of the House of Delegates by appointment in 1928, was the first African American woman to become a member of a legislative body in the United States.

West Virginia’s Memorial Tunnel was the first in the nation to be monitored by television. It opened November 8, 1954.

West Virginia was the first state to use new technology to “measure” and store electronically the face and fingertip images of licensed drivers. Because this recorded information is unique to each individual, these images can prevent stolen identity should a driver’s license be lost or taken.

The longest steel arch bridge (1,700 feet) in the United States is the New River Gorge Bridge in Fayette County.

Organ Cave, near Ronceverte, is the third largest cave in the United States and the largest in the state.

West Virginia State Profile

Sources

The information contained in this chapter has been gathered from a variety of sources, including the following:

U.S. Census Bureau

West Virginia state government agencies

Department of Agriculture

Department of Education

Department of Health and Human Resources

Department of Revenue, Property Tax Division

Department of Transportation

Division of Culture and History

Division of Forestry

Division of Natural Resources

Division of Tourism

Higher Education Policy Commission

Library Commission

State Fire Commission

West Virginia Board of Education

West Virginia State Police

West Virginia Supreme Court of Appeals

WORKFORCE West Virginia